

ever diminish those who seek to take advantage of those opportunities which are there. But I rise for just a minute to make some points that I hope all of us in this Senate and the appropriate committees in this body and the appropriate agencies of the United States are very careful to examine before any acquisition or merger of U.S. Airlines and Delta Airlines were to take place.

First, in our fragile aviation system it is critical to understand that competition is still in the best interests of the American consumer. If you overlay the routes of those two airlines, you will see massive duplications, which ends up in many cases that where there are two competitors in an airport, it is reduced to only one. In the absence of competition, prices rise and service is diminished.

Second, in the great hub-and-spoke airlines and the legacy carriers of this country, people in secondary markets have had access to the major airports such as O'Hare and Hartsfield and LAX in Los Angeles. But as you merge two together, the first place they find savings is in reductions of those flights and those capacities from those secondary markets—the Augusta, Georgia; the Columbuses; the Meridian, Mississippi; the Asheville, North Carolina; and many other cities such as those around the country. It is very important for us to be sure, when we analyze the viability of such a proposal, that we not diminish the opportunity for Americans in those cities to be able to access aviation as they have in the past.

Equally important is the future of aviation in this country. A further consolidation of the airlines we have now would lead us to singular service in many cities, an absence of competition, an inevitable increase in rates, and, unfortunately, less than the healthiest aviation industry in the country.

As this proposal has now come forward, it is important for us in this body to analyze from a competitive standpoint, from a competition standpoint, from a consumer interest standpoint, from a marketplace standpoint, from a secondary market standpoint, and from the heavy prices that have been paid by the American aviation industry to reposition itself post-9/11 to make sure we honor those that have paid the price, are prepared to exit bankruptcy as a viable competitive airline, and not allow a quick, hostile takeover at the last minute and threaten competition, secondary market service, lower flight costs, and the great reward of America for paying the price to do the right thing, to exit bankruptcy and come back stronger than ever before.

I respect this great system. I respect greatly Delta Airlines and the price its employees have paid. I respect greatly the management that committed itself even in bankruptcy to ensuring its employees come first, their pensions would be honored, and they did whatever to see to it that was a reality.

As one Member of this Senate, I will call on my colleagues to look diligently at all of these questions as we move forward and make sure we honor competition, that we honor the secondary market, that we honor the employees of this great airline and do everything we can to preserve the modern competitive aviation system we have today and do not succumb ourselves to the threat of massive consolidation and an absence of competition.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL RYAN E. MILLER

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to LCpl Ryan E. Miller of Gahanna, OH. Ryan was killed on September 3, 2006, by an improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. When he died, he was 2 months into his second tour of duty. He was 21 years old.

Long before he was old enough to enlist in the Marines, Ryan was a courageous protector. He was always looking out for his family and friends—especially his younger sister Tara.

Ryan's aunt Kathie Masters remembers how even when Ryan was just 4 years old, he was always protecting Tara. One day, she had toddled toward the end of the driveway. As she got close to the road, 4-year-old Ryan raced toward her to keep her from crossing into the street. As Kathie recalls:

Tears were streaming down his face and he was screaming, 'No, Tara! No!' He ran to shield her from harm's way.

That story sums up the type of person Ryan Miller was throughout his entire life—selfless, caring, and always concerned first and foremost about others.

Ryan graduated from DeSales High School in 2003, and enlisted in the Marines December of that same year. He told his parents that "he thought he would come out of it a stronger, better person with lifelong friendships." As Ryan told his father, Ed: "There's nothing negative here, Dad. This is all good."

When Ryan was a child his father taught him how to shoot a pellet gun in the backyard. Even at an early age, Ed could see that Ryan was a good marksman. Years later—after enlisting in the Marines—Ryan went to the School of Infantry at Camp Pendleton, CA, and graduated with the Military Occupational Specialty for rifleman.

Ryan's uncle Michael remembers that his nephew welcomed the challenge of the Marines. "He wanted to be tested," he recalls. "He wanted to serve as three past generations of the Miller family did so proudly. He wanted to be the best."

Ryan was so proud of serving his Nation in the military, and his father remembers that the Marines had made

Ryan more confident, mature, and focused. Ryan was first deployed to Iraq in February 2004. After returning that following September, he would give slide shows for anyone interested in what the experience had been like. And although Ryan's second tour was more volatile than his first, he always maintained his positive attitude—always told his parents not to worry. "I can handle anything they can throw at me," his father remembers Ryan saying. "I'll have a lot of good stories to tell you when I get back."

Ryan was, indeed, an excellent Marine. He served with pride, honor, and dedication. Joseph Rivera, a fellow marine who had served with Ryan, wrote the following message to Ryan's family on an Internet tribute Web site:

I'm very sorry for your loss. I knew Ryan shortly after he got to the 3-2. I stood a lot of post with him. He was a good Marine and an even better friend. He was one of the best guys I've ever had the privilege of serving with. He will be missed—but never forgotten.

Five days before his death, Ryan called his parents Ed and Mary. After 10 days of being in the field, he told them he was eager for a shower and a good meal. Assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Lejeune, NC, Ryan anticipated heading out again soon.

For those who knew Ryan, it is easy to remember his sparkling blue eyes, his "trademark smile," and his love of athletics—especially baseball, Ohio State football, and the Minnesota Vikings. People also remember his "quiet work ethic" and how his military service deepened his maturity, focus, and confidence. They also will recall his strong Catholic faith and how he leaned on it during times of trouble.

At Ryan's funeral, his aunt Kathie remembered the dedication with which he served his country, and the way he inspired all he knew with his courage. This is what Kathie said:

The one thing I can say about Ryan for sure [is that] Ryan didn't sit out. For as long as he was able, he shielded us from harm's way. He willingly put others before himself. He died a hero—protecting us, our children, [and] our grandchildren.

The Reverend Anthony P. Lonzo, speaking of Ryan's commitment to service, said this about him:

[Ryan] was a man of God, a man of honor, a man of respect. These are the values that made him the man he is and [the man he] was when he joined the Marine Corps and made the ultimate sacrifice of his life.

At a service held at a chapel in Iraq, SGT Jeff Weaver, who served with Ryan, said the following:

Miller came with one of the greatest attitudes possessed by any man. . . . [He] had a quiet demeanor, combined with a powerful presence that was a source of inspiration for anyone around him. . . . [Ryan]—you will not be forgotten and your memory will be carried on by each and every one of us.

Ryan was a young man with a bright future before him. After returning from Iraq, he planned to go to college and

then work in law enforcement. He was looking forward to playing in a softball league with his father and spending Christmas 2007 at home. He was making plans to pay down his Nissan Altima—the car that was his pride and joy. Ryan was simply the type of person who was always looking forward to the future.

Ryan's death has been a loss to his entire community. There was a special prayer for his family at the DeSales High School chapel. School Principal Dan Garrick said that "we're deeply, deeply saddened. There's a very strong void in his community."

Principal Garrick continued, his words summing up the sense of loss felt by the entire Gahanna community. This is what he said:

We should all be so blessed at the end of our lives for someone to use the word hero to describe us, and that's what Ryan was. Sometimes our society uses that term too loosely. Ryan truly lived the credo of the hero.

Ryan was a brave and courageous man who will always be remembered for his strength and decency. He was a person of both honor and respect—a devoted son, a protective older brother, and a truly outstanding marine. As his father said, "I couldn't have asked for a better son."

My wife Fran and I continue to keep LCpl Ryan Miller's family in our thoughts and in our prayers.

Mr. President, I know the majority leader will be on the floor, and I will tell my colleagues that I will give another tribute which should last about 6 or 7 minutes, at which time the majority leader will be in the Senate.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS HEATH D. WARNER

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a fellow Ohioan who gave his life for the cause of freedom—Marine PFC Heath D. Warner from Canton. He was killed by a roadside bomb in Al Anbar province in Iraq on November 22nd of this year. He was just six weeks shy of his 20th birthday.

Heath Warner was a special young man, whose life was a model of selflessness and courage. And while it is right for us to honor him today and everyday and to grieve his loss, his childhood friend Brad Mowery said it best:

[Heath] doesn't want people to feel sorry for him. He wants people to realize he was doing what he wanted to do. He was living his dream. How many people get to live their dream?

Serving in the military was indeed Heath's lifelong dream, and it was evident all along. When Heath was 12 years old, he visited Arlington National Cemetery with his family. On those hallowed grounds, his family remembers him saluting a member of the honor guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Even at that young age, Heath understood the value and importance of service and sacrifice.

His family pictures show countless other examples of Heath's interest in serving our Nation: There is a picture of him wearing the Army uniform of his grandfather, Randy Metzger, while another picture shows Heath standing

at attention, while saluting at a fort in Virginia.

Even when he received his high school diploma, he walked straight as an arrow, like the splendid marine he would later become.

Heath's mother Melissa recalls that "this is what he always wanted to do. It was his calling in life. I remember him over and over saying, 'I'm gonna go fight for my country.'"

He did just that, and he did it with great honor and dedication.

Heath had many interests. He loved exotic foods, martial arts, and zombie movies. A passionate student, he taught himself German and Japanese and was taking Arabic during his tour in Iraq. And, like all teenagers, he loved hanging out with family and friends.

No matter what he was doing, his unique personality came through. As his friend Brad explained:

He didn't care what anybody thought about him, he just did what he wanted to do. He had his own way, his own style.

Part of Heath's personal style was his love for break dancing. All throughout his time at McKinley High School, he performed at community and school events in the Canton area. But another essential element of Heath's character was to give freely of himself. So it is no surprise that he took his passion for break dancing and turned it into a way to help others. In addition to performing, Heath taught break dancing to younger kids at the Living Fountain Dance Company in Canton.

Kimberly Payne, an instructor at the dance company, remembers this about Heath:

He decided to give a little bit of himself and his heart to other kids. He really believed break dancing would keep kids out of trouble. I'm crushed that such a positive kid has been taken from this world.

Prompted by the terrorist attacks of September 11, Heath joined the Marines while still attending McKinley High. Upon graduation in 2005, Heath went through basic training and eventually became a member of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, based in Hawaii. He was trained as a gunner on a humvee—one of the most dangerous positions. It was exactly where Heath wanted to be—and that was on the front lines.

Before his deployment in August, Heath's family decided to celebrate his 20th birthday early. His father, Scott said that "we knew he wouldn't be here [in Ohio at the time of his birthday in January]. So we decided to have his 20th birthday [before he deployed to Iraq]."

After celebrating with friends and family, Heath deployed to Iraq. Early on in his tour, he survived an IED explosion. Heath wrote in a letter home that he knew "God was watching him." He spent his free time in Iraq reading "The Purpose Driven Life" and studying the Bible.

In his last letter home, Heath told his family that he loved them all and

signed off with a word in Arabic, which meant goodbye. When the news came in late November that Heath had given what Lincoln called "the last full measure of devotion," his family was, of course, devastated. It would be a brokenhearted Thanksgiving for all who had the privilege of knowing Heath Warner. Through tears, his mother remembered, "Last year, [Heath] ate and ate until he got sick. He loved Thanksgiving and this time of year. He loved to smell the turkey."

To honor Heath upon his death and in continued support of the troops, Northeast Ohioans flew their American flags. There has been an outpouring of support for Heath's family, with family, friends, and even strangers dropping by the Warner household to give them food, flowers, and cards. All wanted to remember and honor Heath, who had brought so much happiness into this world.

In his short time on this earth, Heath Warner left a powerful legacy. He was devoted to helping others—a trait best illustrated by the instructions he left behind on the use of his death benefits. He asked his parents to use them to pay for his two younger brothers Chandler and Ashton to go to college. This selfless act tells you all you need to know about the person Heath was.

Heath's dad summed it up this way:

I want people to know that Heath believed in what he was doing. He believed in the fight he was involved in, and he was willing to make the sacrifice. We honor that sacrifice. He's our hero. We need men and women like Heath to serve our country so that we can have the privileges we have. I am in awe of my son.

Heath's life was a precious gift, and he made the most of it.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Heath's parents, Scott and Melissa, his brothers Chandler and Ashton, and all his family and friends in our thoughts and in our prayers.

LANCE CORPORAL RYAN THOMAS MCCAUGHN

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to U.S. Marine Corps LCpl Ryan Thomas McCaughn, of Manchester, NH, a brave American who has made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

Raised in a family that was familiar with the virtues of military service, Ryan knew from an early age that it was his calling to be a U.S. marine. Graduating from Manchester's Central High School in 2005, Ryan gave us a glimpse of the characteristics that would later make him a remarkable marine. While others may have been deterred, Ryan rose to meet the academic challenge by taking three English classes in one semester during his senior year at Central in order to fulfill his dream of joining the Corps. This can-do attitude, as well as his sense of humor and creativity, will always be remembered by those who knew him.

Like Ryan, another man who was in the service of his country and from

New Hampshire, Daniel Webster said, "God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it." In this spirit, a week after graduating from Central, Ryan left for Marine Corps Recruit Training at Parris Island, SC. After completing his initial training, Ryan went to the School of Infantry at Camp Lejeune, NC, where he graduated as mortarman. In February 2006, then Private First Class McCaughn joined 1st Battalion, 6th Marines at Camp Lejeune.

In March 2006, Ryan was promoted to Lance Corporal; 6 months later he arrived in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Tragically, on November 7, 2006, this brave marine was killed during combat operations in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated while he was conducting combat operations against enemy forces. Throughout his short career, Ryan earned accolades which testify to the dedication and devotion he held for the Marine Corps, his fellow marines, and his country. Lance Corporal McCaughn's awards and decorations include the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Purple Heart Medal, and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Patriots from the State of New Hampshire have served our Nation with honor and distinction from Bunker Hill to Baghdad—and U.S. Marine Corps LCpl Ryan McCaughn served in that fine tradition. As he told his mother, he knowingly put himself in harm's way so that others did not have to, and for this, we are eternally grateful. To his last day, Lance Corporal McCaughn exemplified the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps, "Semper Fidelis—Always Loyal."

My heartfelt sympathy, condolences and prayers go out to Ryan's parents, his brothers, and his family and friends who have suffered this grievous hurt. The death of Ryan, only 19 years old, on a battlefield far from New Hampshire is a true loss for our State, our Nation and the world. Although he will be sorely missed by all, his family and friends may sense some comfort in knowing that because of his devotion, sense of duty, and selfless dedication, the safety and liberty of each and every American is more secure. May God bless LCpl Ryan Thomas McCaughn.

#### SERGEANT JEREMY MULHAIR

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army SSG Jeremy Mulhair of Nebraska. Sergeant Mulhair died when an explosion hit his vehicle near Taji, Iraq.

Sergeant Mulhair grew up in the rural areas northwest of Omaha. He attended Omaha Central High School. Sergeant Mulhair enlisted with the Army National Guard in 1995. He joined the Guard for both his deep sense of patriotism and a strong respect for his father Jerry, who served in Vietnam.

Sergeant Mulhair turned his National Guard duty into a job in the reg-

ular Army. He had been in Iraq since October, serving with the Apache Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment. This was his second tour of duty in Iraq. Sergeant Mulhair had served in South Korea as well.

Sergeant Mulhair was a devoted family man. He and his wife Suzie had three children: 9-year-old Celina, 8-year-old Jeremy, Jr., and 9-month-old Maybel. The family hoped to have another child when he returned from Iraq. Thousands of brave Americans like Sergeant Mulhair are currently serving in Iraq.

In addition to his wife and children, Sergeant Mulhair is survived by his parents Jerry and Mildred of Kimballton, IA, brother Robert Mulhair of Mead, NE, and sisters Dixie Heisner and Tammy Lines of Omaha.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SSG Robert Mulhair.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHAPLAIN BARRY BLACK

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, as I depart this body, I would like to extend a heartfelt personal thank you to Chaplain Barry Black. From comforting staff and Members in the wake of tragic deaths to leading erudite Bible study groups, to opening the Senate each morning with prayer, Chaplain Barry Black has shown himself the epitome of a great minister. He is a man of keen intellect, enormous oratorical skill, and great faith.

Personally, I have always been taken by his voice as he offers our opening prayers each morning we are in session. He has a voice that makes everyone perk up, listen, and remain attentive.

I have seen Chaplain Black become a friend, an ally, and a helper to staff and Members from all points on the political spectrum. He has kept his door open to people of all faiths and, as a Seventh Day Adventist minister himself, has helped many Christian Senators and staff—including me—enter into a closer and more meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ.

I am delighted that he will be continuing his service and I am pleased that I could have the honor of appointing him. Barry Black, thank you.

#### TRIBUTE TO BILL PICKLE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, Since 2003, Bill Pickle has served this body with enormous distinction. As the Senate's Sergeant at Arms, he has helped us and he has protected us. Now, as he de-

parts, I wish to thank him, recognize him, and honor him.

For over 3 years, he has excelled in one of the hardest jobs I know of, not just in the Senate, not just in our legislative branch, not just in our Federal Government but I honestly believe, in the entire Nation.

When I came to the job as majority leader, I wanted to find the best professional possible in law enforcement, information technology, security, and continuity planning to lead the Sergeant at Arms operation. I found him in Bill Pickle, and it was one of the smartest decisions I made during my tenure as leader. Bill is the consummate professional. He is smart, with good instincts, and like my colleagues, I value his counsel and insight.

Originally, his office existed to keep order in the Senate Chamber and compel the attendance of Members for votes. In this body's early days, the Sergeant at Arms would circulate through the drinking houses of what was then known as Washington City, rounding up recalcitrant Members and dragging them—sometimes by the coat tails—back to the Senate Chamber.

Perhaps today's members do a slightly better job showing up for votes. To my knowledge, Bill Pickle has never had to bodily drag any of my colleagues in for a vote, but that has not made his job easier.

Today's Sergeant at Arms is part security specialist, part corporate executive, and part management information systems administrator, and that is just part of it. Every day, the Sergeant at Arms' office must deal with the demands of 100 opinionated, demanding men and women, thousands of American citizens, officials from every part of our own Government, and people from around the world.

The duties that fall under his office range from running our recording studio to serving on the board that oversees the U.S. Capitol Police, but one thing unites them all their ability to connect this body to the people of this Nation.

Through his leadership, his courage, and his vision, against immense challenges, Bill Pickle has kept this building and this body open and accessible to the people we serve.

During the whole of Bill Pickle's time in office, our Nation has been at war against Islamic fascists, enemies who wish to strike at the principles of openness and democratic governance that this body represents. And he has kept us safe. Not a single serious assault has occurred on this body during his time in office. The Capitol is safer than it has ever been. For that alone, we all owe him a debt of gratitude.

Every time his office has faced a challenge, Bill Pickle has risen to the occasion. Time after time, he has tackled difficult tasks with aplomb. He preside over a necessary expansion of the Capitol Police, appointed the Senate's first chief information officer, helped